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A Ghost in Europe: Right-Wing Extremism and Its Metamorphoses

Raluca Viviana Stireanu
Eastern Illinois University

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A GHOST IN EUROPE:

RIGHT-WING EXTREMISM AND ITS METAMORPHOSES

(TITLE)

BY

RALUCA VIVIANA STIREANU

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A GHOST IN EUROPE:

RIGHT – WING EXTREMISM AND ITS METAMORPHOSES

Thesis

Raluca Viviana Stireanu

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DEDICATION

To my first and leading mentor in Political Science, Sebastian.

Without his help, understanding, patience, and exceptional dedication, I would have missed the beauty and the intellectual challenge of one of the most fascinating fields in Social Sciences.

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ABSTRACT

The main assumption of this thesis is that fascism is not an historical feature, nor a geographical one. The premises for the rise of fascism are beyond time and space; it can develop anywhere, anytime, in a certain context and under some conditions. These context and these conditions are to be explained and described in this thesis. I will compare the features of fascism in inter-war Europe with those of neo-fascism, and I will also compare the features of Eastern European fascims with those of the Western Europe; the main reason for these comparisons is that it was argued that fascim was just a characteristic of the pre-World War I, and that after the end of the Cold War it has developed only in the Eastern Europe because of the transition to democracy process. The aim of this thesis is to contradict these hyupotheses. As case studies I have chosen Austria and Romania because within these countries both features of fascism and neo-fascism have developed; and moreover, one country represents the Western democratic Europe (membership of the EU), aand the other is a country in a process of transition (candidate country at EU accession).

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Introduction

The assumption this thesis starts from is that the right-wing extremism is not finished in Europe. Current explanations focus only on the former communist part of Europe, arguing that the revival of the extremism is caused by the economic and social problems those countries face through the process of transition (Braun 1997; Szayna 1997). Once those problems are overcome, right – wing extremism will not be a source of concern any longer. I assume that this type of understanding and approach to such a sensitive and potentially dangerous issue is limited, and even damaging. The current right – wing extremism reviving within Europe is neither a regional nor a temporal problem.

By the end of the World War II, the issue of the right – wing parties was very sensitive around Europe and nobody would have dared by that time to predict their rise and influence only 50 years later. But for the last ten to fifteen years all around Europe the right- wing extremism has emerged unexpectedly, in the form of both social movements and political parties. The 1980s saw the rise of a new wave[i] of right – wing extremism across Western Europe. "The third wave of right – wing extremism has been the most successful post – war period, in both an electoral and ideological sense, for right – wing extremist parties almost everywhere" (Mudde 1996, 229).

The phenomenon of right – wing radicalism has developed once the Iron Curtain fell, spreading around the former communist countries. Right – wing extremists have become more and more visible across Europe. First by violent activities; then by increasing electoral support; and finally, by entering legislatures. Right – wing extremist parties act in each country, and they have an important word to say at the domestic politics level. "The extreme right has become a relevant factor in West European politics both within

the party system and outside of it (as, for example, the extreme right linked violence in Germany, Austria and elsewhere)" (Mudde 2000, 6).

There is a need for studying the right – wing extremism not because it represents an imminent threat to democracy or liberalism, but because it may become one. The simple fact that it emerged again in Europe, even though it seemed to be proscribed for good, should be seen as a warning signal. Extremism is not to be treated as a danger, but as a serious potential threat. The unexpected victory of Freiheitliche Partei Oesterreichs (FPOE) found Europe, and especially the European Union (EU) partner countries of Austria, unprepared. The reaction was strong, sanctions have been raised against Austria, but nobody knew where the roots of this happening should be looked for, and what type of strategy was the most appropriate to be followed. Right – wing extremism should be perceived as a potential danger, meaning that it must be correctly understood in order to prevent its development towards threatening importance, and to be prepared with comprehensive strategies for annihilating it, instead of ad-hoc strategies that do not heal the causes.

Most of the scholars who studied the phenomenon of right – wing extremism emergence after the end of the Cold War argued that it was a consequence of the fall of communism, and that the right radicalism emerged only in the East European countries where there was a different context given by the modernization and democratization processes. But radical – right extremism is not a feature of the democratization process. The first time when it emerged in Europe was in inter – war period and took to the breakdown of most of the liberal democracies on the continent; it emerged not *because of* the process of transition to democracy, but *against* democracy itself.

In Fall 1999, when the FPOE entered the coalition in power, all the EU countries were scared and hurried up to take tough diplomatic measures against Austria. These reactions have been followed by some analyses about the causes and the consequences of Haider's success, but only for a short period of time. Then the Western Europe became silent. Austria seemed to keep working properly within the EU, and other such happenings have not occurred in other Western European countries. The scholars focused again on the Eastern European countries, considering them as the most exposed to the danger of radicalism, almost completely ignoring the Austrian case.

What happened in Austria then? Nothing can arise without a cause. But the arguments used for the rising radicalism in Eastern Europe are not appropriate for Austria. The main assumption of this paper is that there are some common elements, present both in Western and in Eastern European countries, which could determine the emergence of the far – right anywhere in Europe. I will focus on identifying and discussing these common elements in Western and Eastern Europe, which could have influenced the rise of right – wing parties. The goal is to emphasize the fact that both 'sides' are exposed to the danger of radicalism.

My attempt in this thesis is to discuss that there is nothing in Eastern, as opposed to Western Europe, which would make this part of the continent more exposed to the dangers of the revival of the radical – right extremism. Moreover, I will argue also that fascism is not just a feature of the inter – war Europe, and once that time passed, fascism became also history. My aim is to show that the contemporary context could become a favorable environment for the development of fascism.

The main hypotheses of this thesis are that the European right – wing extremism has the same roots all across the continent (without any major difference between East and West), and that the same social perceptions and constructions determine the contemporary right – wing extremism, as in inter – war Europe. There will be a twofold argument is this research: that there are some common elements determining the emergence of right-wing extremism all around Europe, without geographic or social difference; and that the extremism is a lasting problem in Europe, not overcome at the end of the Second World War. Following the above observations, I will attempt to identify the main elements of the right-wing extremism in Europe and to discuss possible ways of avoiding fatal consequences of the right-wing extremism within contemporary Europe.

1.1. Methodology

This is aimed to be a qualitative analysis of the roots of right- wing extremism in Europe. It can be considered a *comparative study* because, as argued above, I will investigate common elements of the right-wing extremism in Eastern and Western Europe. Even though this research project aims to be a comprehensive one in the respect of discussing the "faces" of right-wing extremism all around Europe, some cases will be more emphasized at a moment or another of the discussion, because of their explicit importance for the argument (France, Germany, Austria, Romania, Hungary).

It also can be considered a *time – series* approach because I will consider WWII as an important intervening variable in the history of right – wing extremism. But no specific quantitative method will be used. For the purposes of argument and debate, I will use

surveys and electoral results, but only to sustain qualitative observations. I will also use historical documents, speeches, empirical observations, biographies and memoirs of the most important figures of the right-wing extremism in Europe.

The comparative method is the most appropriate one for the study of fascism because, as it will be discussed later, the phenomenon of fascism have developed several and different "faces" and "varieties"; and it is impossible to narrow down the analysis to a single 'most comprehensive' case study. There is a need for the fascism to be understood in the historical, social, economic context of each country or region where it developed in order to have the whole picture of its features. The literature also emphasizes that, paradoxically, fascism is the real internationalist movement of late 19th century and early 20th century. Even though Marxism was meant to be the movement of proletariat around the world, it ended up by developing nationalist features and isolated revolutions. Meanwhile, fascism, which was a movement with strong nationalistic roots and little cosmopolitan vision, definitely developed into a European movement, some scholars even arguing that it actually spread beyond the borders of the Old continent.

Tendencies of studying fascism from a comparative perspective have developed since the beginning of the scholarly interest for this phenomenon. But for a quite long time after the end of the World War Two, scholars have focused on Germany and Italy, trying to identify their major features and then applying those findings to other cases. Only in late 1970s, "the prospects for a comparative politics of fascism" have started to be "reasonably bright" (Gregor 1976). This trend in the research of fascism was even more emphasized and requested by the changes and realities of the 1980s. Once the "third wave" of right – wing extremism spreading around Europe, scholars realized that the

comparative approach would actually be the most useful in order to identify the roots and the conditions of fascism emergence. Ever since, the study of fascism has been mainly developed in a comparative perspective.

1.2. Definitions

One of the first things necessary in the discussion about radical – right extremism and fascism is to define concepts. Most of the scholars in the field observe the lack of a unanimously accepted definition of these terms; moreover, there are some who assume that the concept of fascism itself should be eradicated from the political vocabulary. But before going in-depth of this debate, the relationship between right – wing radicalism and fascism should be identified. There are many attempts in the literature to describe or define this relationship. Different approaches bring interesting nuances and useful details. But since it is not the particular purpose of this thesis to focus on this relationship, for the necessary conceptual framework I will focus on Cas Mudde's synthesis of previous and various literature concerning this issue.

Mudde (1996) observes that most scholars include eight to ten features in their definition of right – wing extremism[ii]; he further identifies three approaches to right – wing extremism definition. The *quantitative* approach is the one where "all features are considered equally important and only one criterion is used: the number of features". The *qualitative* approach emphasizes one or more feature(s) that has (have) to be present in order to accept the existence of right – wing extremism. The third approach, called "the *mixed*" one, is a combination of the previous two; the scholars using this approach define

a phenomenon as 'right – wing extremism' by counting the number of 'important' features of right – wing extremism present in that phenomenon.

There are also some conceptual overlappings and confusions. "Right – wing radicalism or radical right is the predecessor of the term right – wing extremism, and is in fact most often used interchangeably. The difference between radicalism and extremism is that the former is 'only' verfassungsfeidlich (in opposition to the principles of the constitution), whereas the latter is verfassungswidrig (unconstituional)" (Mudde 1996, 12). In this line of linguistic clarifications, Ramet observes that "the term *radical* right is used interchangeably with the terms *ultraright* and *extreme right* and is generally applied to twenty – century incarnations of organized intolerance" (Ramet 1999, 4).

In the 1990s, the terminology referring to right – wing extremism expanded and such concepts as "national – populism, right – wing populism, radical right – wing populism" and so on have started to be used. The scholars either do not clearly distinguish between right – wing populism and right – wing extremism, or they use the former concept when focusing "more on the political style and less on the anti – democratic feature(s)" of the parties in question (Mudde 1996, 232).

Mudde (1996, 2000) developed the concept of "party families" which include political parties "across countries predominantly on the basis of their ideology". He evaluates a comprehensive literature on the criteria and classifications that could be used in order to include a party in one "family" or another. This evaluation brings to two important results: on one hand Mudde (1996) elaborates a list of parties that are commonly considered as belonging to the right – wing extremism "family" in Western

Europe (see Table 1). On the other hand he draws the conclusion that *fascism* is the ideological basis on which the "family" of right – wing extremism is created.

The literature has established "a number of common characteristics and ideology" shared by the right – wing extremist "political family": "nationalism, racism, anti – Semitism, intolerance of certain ethnic minorities...anticommunism, antipluralism, anti-Americanism (read anti-Westernism as a whole), and antidemocracy" (Williams 1999, 29). All these features are only other words for establishing an ideological connection between right – wing extremist parties and fascism (Ebata 1997a; Ignazi 1997).

The ideology of fascism will be broadly discussed in the following chapter. This review of the literature will be developed in two parts: first the concept of ideology will be approached, with the specific goal to identify whether and how fascism can be defined as an ideology. Then I will concentrate on the "fascism minimum", namely on the core characteristics which could be understood as the fundamentals of the fascist ideology.

In the next chapter I will address the question of neo – fascism, discussing questions such as: whether it is a natural development of the traditional fascism or something completely new; what it shares with the traditional fascism, if anything; if not, whether it may be called fascism; and whether there is such differentiation as traditional / neo – fascism at all, or we may speak only about *fascism*. These questions will be addressed at three levels or from three perspectives: *micro*, *meso*, and *macro*[iii]. The first refers to individual motivations; the second involves local factors, and the third focus on wider, international elements, all of them contributing to the birth and development of fascism.

In this chapter I will investigate one of the hypotheses of this thesis, namely that the fascism cannot be temporarily defined; I will discuss the approaches which understand fascism as either an inter – war or a post – communist feature. I argue that fascism cannot be historically defined and that its emergence has nothing to do to with some specific historical settings. The fourth chapter will investigate the second hypothesis of this thesis, namely that fascism cannot either be defined geographically. The argument will by symmetrical with that of the previous chapter, but the focus will be on the East – West dichotomy. I will argue that such a dichotomy does not characterize the phenomenon of fascism. The fifth chapter will focus more on two cases, even though concrete examples and cases will be addressed and discussed all along the thesis. I consider Austria and Romania worth and appropriate to be used in order to enforce the findings and the arguments of the research because they share an inter – war fascist experience, a fascist revival experience, they also represent the East and West, one being a long – term democracy, the other struggling on the democratization way. This chapter will also bring into the spotlight the most recent developments in the rise of right – wing parties and candidates across Europe for the last years.

Chapter 2
Literature Review

2.1. Fascism as ideology

The concept of ideology itself was at stake in the 1950s and 1960s, when a long intellectual debate developed among the scholars whether this concept should be used any longer and whether it meant anything after all. One of the scholars who stood up for the significance and the relevance of the concept of ideology was Joseph LaPalombara (1966). He observes that there are three fundamental weaknesses in the literature suggesting "the end of ideology"[iv]. First LaPalombara asserts that this idea of "the exhaustion of political ideas in the West refers to that particular case involving the disillusionment experienced by the neo – Marxist intellectuals". The second weakness is the narrow focus of those scholars on the Western countries. They overlook the intellectual potential of a "broader comparative ideological analysis". And, as a third weakness, LaPalombara discusses the theory of "the end of ideology" as an ideology on its own. He further emphasizes the continuous emergence of new myths, new symbols and new vocabulary. This process may not be called 'end of ideology' but 'change of ideology', which is something different.

Other scholars elaborate means of evaluating whether a particular political thinking may be labeled 'ideology' or not. Burks (1949, 183) develops a "conception of ideology for historians" where he mentions as being important and relevant elements for an ideology an inclusive interpretation of human history and a highly articulated theory of the social order. Burks also assumes that a 'good' ideology should 'inculcate these ideas by means of an educational system and an appropriate hagiolatry. Moreover, an

ideology should posses mass allegiance and should also be identified with the policy and interests of a major power. Macridis (1983) divides political ideologies into three categories – *status quo*, *radical or revolutionary*, and *reformist* – and then he identifies some criteria of evaluating ideologies – coherence, pervasiveness, extensiveness, and intensiveness. Ingersoll and Matthews (1991) put the concept of political ideology in the perspective of the political philosophy. And they observe that "an ideology also attempts a meaningful analysis of the existing environment so as to discover real truths concerning humanity"; from this perspective, an ideology has more in common with the traditional political philosophy than with the modern one. The most important characteristic ideology and traditional political philosophy share is the orientation toward action; both of them aim to explain the world and the human behavior, and then they offer a variant to alter the existing order, having as final purpose the improvement of human life. Ingersoll and Matthews (1991) identify three functions of an ideology: *to simplify* the view of the world; *to demand action* either for (when out of power) or against (when in power) change; and *to justify* the course of action taken as well as the view of the world established.

The question is how fascism fits in these approaches and understandings of ideology. What type of ideology is it, if any? Which are its major characteristics? Fascism itself has been a controversial concept, some scholars considering that it has always been too fluid to be evaluated as a political ideology, other scholar emphasizing that there have been so many varieties of fascism that one is not able any longer to distinguish a core of characteristics in order to define the ideology. Joes (1978) identified three types of objections to the study of fascism. The first category contains the rejection

of fascism "on deeply emotional grounds", namely on the repugnance and revulsion toward the horrors caused especially by the Nazis in Germany and in the world. In the second category are included those approaches that understand fascism as "an important, if bizzare, phenomenon in Europe of the period 1918 – 1945, but which has been fortunately defeated and uprooted". The third category of objections simply considers fascism "without any useful meaning" (Joes 1978, 3). Allardyce (1979) develops an argument against all three meanings of the concept fascism – generic concept, political ideology, personality type, asserting that all three have been artificially constructed to define and describe a non – entity. Allardyce (1979) argues that fascism is not an ideology because of two reasons. On one hand it is difficult first to identify the true intellectual roots of fascism and then to connect them with the "men of action" of the fascist movements, especially Mussolini and Hitler. On the other hand the content of fascist ideology itself is very fluid, no written or coherently elaborated into a doctrine left behind as legacy by the founders of fascism.

The supporters of the idea that fascism is an ideology included it in the 'isms' gallery of the intellectual thinking at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. Fascism became as relevant and worth to be studied as *communism*, *socialism*, *liberalism*, *marxism*. Furthermore, it was included in the broader concept of totalitarianism developed between 1940s and 1960s primarily by Hannah Arendt (1951), Carl Friedrich and Zbigniev Brzezinski (1956).

The main suggestion of totalitarianism studies was that the most important ideological and political division in the 20th century was not so much that between left and right as that between Western pluralism and all kinds of totalitarianism. These

approaches put fascism in a very long intellectual tradition, and also at the same level of importance with other doctrines that made the modern history of the world. But "totalitarianism never sought to explain fully the origins and complexities of fascism and the rest of the political extreme right, and certainly does not so" (Blinkhorn 2000, 101). The totalitarian concept does not offer a comprehensive definition and explanation for the roots of fascism; it only places fascism on the opposite side of Western liberal – democracy. This approach has its roots in the 1930s research, when scholars assumed that "mature capitalism had two and only two, alternative outcomes as historical possibilities: socialism or fascism" (Gregor 1976). One of the criticisms brought to the concept of totalitarianism was that "it is implicitly indifferent to empirical research on the nature of the 'isms' from the standpoint of their differential socio – economic consequences" (Groth 1964).

One ideological observation which should be made is that "there is a fundamental divide between the extreme right and conservative parties that embrace economic liberalism with touches of traditionalism in social outlooks" (Szayna 1997, 114). In this respect an important differentiation was made "between fascist movements per se and the nonfascist (or sometimes protofascist) authoritarian right" (Payne 1980). He observes that fascist, radical right and conservative right differ among themselves in a variety of ways: philosophy, military use, approach to modern economic development. Payne asserts that fascism might be situated in between the other two political orientations; in order to emphasize this classification, Payne develops a table with the most important parties and movements across Europe in the inter – war period (see Table 2). Linz (1976) observes in this respect that "the ideology and above all the rhetoric appeals for the incorporation of a

national cultural tradition selectively in the new synthesis in response to new social classes, new social and economic problems, and with new organizational conceptions of mobilization and participation, differentiate them from conservative parties".

Beside the debate about the appropriateness of the concept of 'ideology', the fascism itself lacks the manifesto, the program most ideologies have, and that exposes it to criticism and controversy. But if it is to follow the elements and classifications mentioned above, it may be observed that fascism presents most of the characteristics of an ideology. The starting assumption of this study is then that fascism *is* an ideology; the next step is to try to identify what features define this ideology.

2.2. The fascist minimum

There has been no unanimously accepted definition of fascism established. Paxton (1998) argues that there are five major difficulties in the attempt to elaborate any definition of fascism ideology. The first one is "a problem of timing", meaning that the phenomenon was unexpected at the time when it arise and in consequence it has been poorly understood since the beginning. The second difficulty is the "mimicry", namely the fact that there are many movements and parties that all claim to have a fascist ideology even though their common points are few. Moreover, these individual cases are spread in space and time, so it is even more difficult to find shared characteristics and elements. Another difficulty is the fact that the fascist doctrine lacks a founding document or manifesto containing its major points. In consequence the actions taken by fascist leaders represent at the same time the manifesto of the ideology. The last difficulty is given by the "overuse" of the concept of fascism itself.

Despite these difficulties, there have been some attempts to encompass the features of fascism in short definitions. Eatwell (1996) describes this quest for some essential features and characteristics of fascism as "fascist minimum". The term was introduced in fascist studies by Ernst Nolte in the 1960s; he defined his "fascist minimum" as a combination of six points: "antimarxims, antiliberalism, the Fuehrerprinzip, the militarized party, the tendency to anticonservatism and the goal of totalitarianism" (Nolte 1968, 385). Since the 1960s, several scholars have tried to identify the most valuable and comprehensive "fascist minimum". Some developed short definitions, some emphasized some key concepts. Even though none of these attempts are unanimously considered as the final answer, Griffin's definition is one of the most appreciated in the literature. He holds that "fascism's mythic core in its various permutations is a palingenetic form of populist ultra – nationalism" (Griffin 1995, 4). Despite the fact that he introduces two other controversial concepts in this definition (populism and nationalism), Griffin emphasizes the idea of 'myth' which is an important element of the fascist propaganda and ideology, and which, surprisingly, has been in most part ignored by scholars. Another important point is that he underlines the palingenetic aspect of fascism, considering it an everlasting political phenomenon.

Eatwell (1996) develops both a short definition and a "four – point core set of annotations". He assumes that "an ideology that strives to forge social rebirth based on a holistic-national radical Third Way, though in practice fascism has tended to stress style, especially action and the charismatic leader, more than detailed programme, and to engage in a Manichean demonisation of its enemies". Ebata (1997a, 21) considers fascism as being "an ideology based on natural history, the pursuit of an expansionary

and aggressive geopolitical policy, and corporate statism". Linz (1976, 16) opens a line of definitions *a contrario* of fascism. He speaks of fascism as being an *anti* movement; "it defines itself by the things against which it stands...which can be summarized as follows: anti – Marxist, anti – communist, anti – proletarian, but also anti – liberal, anti – parliamentarian, and in a very special sense, anti – conservative, anti – bourgeois".

Paxton (1998) asserts that the main cause why fascism could not have been comprehensively defined was the way it has been approached. He says that previous attempts of defining were characterized by " a static and isolated manner". Instead of this approach, he comes up with a definition of fascism in "five stages". The attempt of this definition is to describe the trajectory of right – wing extremist parties from their emergence through the "dual power". The first stage is the initial creation that usually arises within a sufficiently implanted democracy. Next, the movement will become a party, and as a consequence, the third stage is the acquisition of power that most commonly happens within a weak liberal state and a political deadlock. Next the extremist parties will exercise power and finally they will evolve in either of two directions: radicalization or entropy. Paxton's description is applicable to the fascist emergence in the inter – war period but not to neo – fascism. If it is to apply these stages to the contemporary right – wing extremism features, almost none of them fit. But Paxton's model offers the valuable alternative of a dynamic study of fascism. Since there are several variants of fascism, and since it is such a spread phenomenon in time and space, this type of approach would be the most appropriate and could provide a more comprehensive picture of fascism.

The list of definitions could be even longer, each of them adding new points or emphasizing some of those already mentioned. This thesis does not aim to establish a new or a more comprehensive definition of fascism; it only aims to argue that this is a phenomenon that did not disappear in the post World War Two era, and that it is likely to emerge all around Europe, without any geographical difference. An inherent consequence of this approach is that certain features will be identified, which could be considered another "fascist minimum". Those features would have passed the test of time and geography, so they might provide a step forward in the process of looking for the 'right' definition of fascism.

Since there are no written fascist manifesto and no comprehensive fascism definition, several interpretations or approaches have developed in order to explain fascism emergence and features. Again, there are numerous schools of thought and theories dealing with fascism roots and emergence. For instance, Ebata (1997a, 22) identifies "social – psychological theories; socioeconomic theories; political theories; and international, or global, theories"; Mudde (1996) distinguishes four schools: the Marrxist school, the extremism – theoretical school, the modernization school, and the 'new politics' school. These theories can be summarized in five major trends.

There is first *the uniqueness theory* that assumes that fascism manifested only in the inter – war and once WWII over, Europe overcame the danger of any emergence of fascism (Payne 1980). Another important theory is *the Marxist* one, which developed into a real school of thought because Marxism and fascism were the two rivals in polarizing the society when democracy was at stake. At the basis of the theory are the formulations of the Hungarian Communist Gyula Sas and the German Clara Zetkin. They developed

their understanding of fascism in 1923, and later their view became the standard Third International interpretation of fascism "as a violent, dictatorial agent of bourgeois capitalism" (Gregor 1974; Payne 1980). The most controversial theory is *the modernization theory*; some scholars arguing that fascism represented a trend against the changes in the society and toward conservatism and preservation of traditional values (Turner 1972). Other scholars understood fascism in exactly the contrary way, as a result of the modernization phenomenon (Gregor 1973), and others suggested that that in some underdeveloped countries fascism was a modernizing force, but turned against the modernization process in countries like Germany that were already industrialized (Cassels 1974).

The next theory, *the psychosocial – psychological one*, starts from the assumption that certain personality characteristics made individuals more exposed to become fascism's supporters; or that some social contexts enhance these likeliness. Fromm (1941) exposed the thesis of some feelings developed by the inter – war middle class which transformed them into fascists – isolation, impotence, anomie, and frustration. Reich (1930) developed this approach into something more Freudian, emphasizing the psychosexual explanation. Nathan (1943) is another important scholar who applies Freudianism to fascist attitudes. His main assumption is that individuals develop with the leaders the same relationship as they developed with their parents during childhood. Nowadays this type of approach is still in fashion, Durin (2000) developing a comprehensive psychoanalytic study of Hitler and his followers, using psychological and Freudian principles. The most important research within this theory was that conducted by Adorno et al. (1950), where they tried to establish a scale of measurement for the

"authoritarian personality". Their study is not based on Freud's theories, and it is an attempt to create a scientific framework for the study of the involvement of psycho-sociology in fascism support.

The last theory is *the managerial revolution*, controversial at its turn because some scholars argue that fascism is the revolution of the new managerial elite and it represents "the triumph of the technocrat and the expert" (Macridis 1983, 38). On the other hand there are scholars arguing that "no point remained less clear in the doctrines of most fascist movements than economic structure and goals" (Payne 1980, 5). This theory approaches fascism as the result of a new economic order, as the representative political system within which new forms of economic organization and distribution develop.

As it has been shown above, the fascist minimum is very difficult to be identified. The short definitions are not comprehensive, the lists of features are too fluid, and the theories focus on specific elements involved in the fascist phenomenon, without a synthesis perspective. In this paper, I will use the theories explained above in order to identify the features of fascism in Europe in the inter – war period and in the 1980s – 1990s.

Chapter 3
Is Neo – Fascism an Oxymoron?

There is unanimously accepted that the "new" right – wing extremism has less to do with the movements at the beginning of the 20th century. "Most of the big fascist movements of the inter-war period grew from the terrible struggle, the defeat, and the territorial losses of the war" (Merkl 1997, 24). The social problems and social contexts were different at the end of a war which shuddered Europe. Mudde (2000, 16) speaks about "waves" in the rise of extreme right parties and he assumes that 1980 – 2000 is the 'third wave' of post – war right – wing extremism, and "without a doubt the most successful period in both the electoral and ideological sense for such parties in almost every West European country".

One of the hypotheses of this thesis is that the 'neo' features of fascism do not differ from those developed in the inter – war Europe. I assume that there is no such thing as "traditional" and/or "neo" fascism; it is only the *fascist ideology* that uses particular historical settings in order to gain support, and to spread. The main argument of this study is that fascism was not only an inter – war feature, and it disappeared after the end of WWII for good. My main hypothesis is that fascism could arise anywhere in Europe, at any time, and that the increase in support for the right – wing parties and movements only shows that maybe the time is ripe nowadays for Europe to face again the spectrum of fascism. My assumption is that the fascist ideology and fascist features did not become extinct; they only transformed and adapted to the post – modern man, society, and

international context. As the title of this thesis suggests, fascism is still a ghost haunting Europe.

The question is why those 'waves', discussed in the literature, have still emerged, since fascism was defeated in the WWII, and how the success of the 'third wave' (in the 1980s – 1990s) can be explained. Kitschelt and McGann (1998, 1) identify from the literature four hypotheses as possible answers to these questions. The first one is "a revival of fascist and national socialist ideology in the midst of an economic crisis with high unemployment". The second variant is "a single – issue racist and xenophobic backlash against the multi – culturalization of Western European societies caused by the influx of immigrants from non – Occidental civilizations, particularly from the Islamic, African, and Far East regions". A third hypothesis focuses on domestic institutional changes in advanced capitalist democracies and singles out the increasing control of individual lives by a coalescing 'class' of political and corporate leaders as the trigger for a ' right – libertarian' and 'populist' backlash against big government and consociational or corporatist politico-economic elites." The last hypothesis is the one proposed by Kitschelt and McGann (1998) themselves. They assume that "societal change in contemporary capitalism has increased the salience of political partisan appeals to economically rightist positions favoring market allocations over political redistribution of economic resources."

These hypotheses and other approaches in the literature (discussed at different points in this study) could be summarized in three general levels important for the re-emergence and development of the fascism. I will follow these three lines in order to emphasize certain characteristics of the inter – war fascism, and the way they are adapted

and transformed in modern Europe. First, there is the individual level. At it will be shown below, some personal characteristics and personality types are more likely to follow a right – wing extremist line than others. Some individuals are more likely to become fascists (or neo – fascist) than others. The second level is the societal level, namely the observation that certain economic, social and even political trends and features in a country will be more likely to become an appropriate context for the development of fascism. The third level of analysis is the "macro" one, namely the general European or even international elements and features that would influence the emergence and spread of fascist ideology, movements, and parties.

3.1. "Micro" perspective

As argued above, the first level of analysis is the individual level. One important question would concern the supporters, the adepts of the right – wing extremism. Who are they? Who were they in inter – war Europe? How different are they in the 1980s and 1990s, if different at all? My argument is that the same fundamental things that drove people in the inter – war Europe toward fascism, are driving them nowadays toward the same features, and will always drive them toward radicalism and extremism.

Fromm (1984) established a psychological portrait of the fascist supporters in the inter – war period. They were middle class, especially lower middle class; their whole life was based on the principle of scarcity – economically as well as psychologically. The post – WWI period generated some factors that frustrated even more these types of people. First, it was the economic decline of the old middle class. Then some psychological considerations that increased their likeliness to support fascism: defeat in war, downfall of the monarchy, the decline of the old social symbols of authority. Hitler

and fascism expressed for them a new form of 'order', 'discipline', and 'authoritarianism'. Moreover, it was a promise of national revival, of national fight for the defeated pride during the previous world war.

The relationship between the psychological characteristics of a person and his environment are an important part of the study of the prerequisites of fascism. Adorno et al. (1950) developed the study "The Authoritarian Personality" about this relationship and its dialectic. They consider that there is a link between the external economic and social factors and the internal characteristics of the individual, so there cannot be an exclusive approach to the Nazism phenomenon, either "micro" or "meso" – as I defined the levels in this study. What Adorno et al. (1950) tried was to bring into the spotlight on the "potentially fascistic person", taking into consideration both the internal and the external factors, which influence the development of such a character.

First thing the authors discuss is the ideology. They assume that this cannot have a direct and full influence on the individual because "an individual's susceptibility to this ideology depends primarily upon his psychological needs" (Adorno et al. 1950, 221). These needs are organized essentially in what one may call "personality" – so, the authors assume then that "personality may be regarded as a *determinant* of ideological preferences". Following the logic of this argumentation, next thing to notice is that "personality evolves under the impact of the social environment and can never be isolated from the social totality within which it occurs" (Adorno et al. 1950, 241). This line of reasoning brings to the conclusion that there is a certain socio – economic context more likely to determine the awakening of certain "fascistic person". Not all the people within the same socio – economic context would react the same to those conditions; there are

certainly some people, already having some characteristics, who are more likely to adopt and follow a radical extremist ideology.

One of the main findings of the study of Adorno et al. (1950, 232) is that: "the soundest approach is to consider that in the determination of any ideology, as in the determination of any behavior, there is a situational factor and a personality factor, and that a careful weighing of the role of each will yield the most accurate prediction".

The second important finding of the study is the description and measurement tools used by the scholars in order to approach "the ideological trends and methods for exposing personality, the contemporary situation, and the social background." Their aim is to measure "the quantification of antidemocratic trends at the level of personality". In order to measure these anti – democratic trends, "the task was to formulate scale items which, though they were statements of opinions and attitudes and had the same form as those appearing in ordinary opinion – attitude questionnaires, would actually serve as <giveaways> of underlying antidemocratic trends in the personality" (Adorno et al 1950, 222-241).

There have been derived and defined a number of variables, which taken together, made up the basic content of the Fascism scale. These variables have been classified in 9 items – all together having 77 assumptions – and they have been correlated in order to have the full picture of an antidemocratic personality and the factors, which would determine this trend. As a conclusion, the authors consider that "the function of an authoritarian ideology and practice can be compared to the function of neurotic symptoms. Such symptoms result from unbearable psychological conditions and at the same time offer a solution that makes life possible".

One synthesis of the socio - psychological dispositions of the "neo - fascist personality" is given by (Krejci 1995). He assumes that the first one is "the homogeneity preference." People tend to develop certain limits of their openness toward different cultures, languages and religions. They prefer to live and work with people sharing their views and values. The second disposition is "the superiority complex which may often be an overcompensation for the opposite – an inferiority complex"; and the third one is "the wish to bring all the kin into the common fold". This tendency implies both unity and the need for an authoritarian arrangement that would provide security, discipline, order. The next disposition is the "people's instinctive resistance to socioeconomic change." This tendency is best represented by "the distaste of the traditionally minded lower middle class towards the encroachments of big business and finance upon their way of earning a living". The last disposition is the "admiration of strength and heroism which may develop into the cult of violence".

These are studies that emphasize the main socio – psychological trends in the inter – war period and, respectively, in the last two decades. Most likely to be exposed to fascist ideology and extremist features are those people feeling insecure, having inferiority complexes, tending to identify themselves with powerful and heroic figures. Nothing has changed in this respect for the last 50/ 60 years, in Europe at least. There are still people perceiving themselves as insignificant, ignored by the system, weak, frustrated – and those people look for strong authoritarian figures to identify with. They are conscious about their lack of opportunities for social success, and they try either to hide their inferiority under authoritarian and despotic behaviors toward even weaker groups of people than themselves, or to support and promote authoritarian leaders and

personalities who guarantee discipline and order. These personality characteristics have not changed and they will never do because they are innate in the human nature. It is an inconsistent argument to say that weak, frustrated and insecure persons emerged only in the inter – war Europe. What differs indeed between that time and the last decades are the economic and social conditions that contributed to the awakening of the fascist feelings. But these differences will be discussed in the next part because they regard the meso level of the development of fascism.

Before going further to develop those arguments, one thing must to be discussed – that is the social categories most likely to support fascism. For the new emerging right – wing, young people seem extremely relevant. Unlike in the inter – war period, when middle age adults could not accept and understand the behavior of youth, trying to reestablish traditional values by supporting fascism, in contemporary times, young people are more likely to enroll in this type of movements. "There is little doubt that the vast majority of new recruits to the various European radical right groups is male, lower class, and very young. Being a radical right – winger seems to be highly related to the difficulties of growing – up…combined with being a lower class male in the decades of the eighties and nineties" (Merkl 1997, 36). Young people are more exposed to social insecurity (especially unemployment), and they also show "a particularly high level of political alienation and disillusionment" (Harris 1994, 50).

If the age group differs from inter – war period, then the occupations and social status will differ as well. The current supporters of the neo – fascism are in most part students or young unemployed, or low paid workers. The most common profile of the right – wing extremist voter nowadays in Europe is a man between 18 and 39 years old,

and lower middle class employee (Hainsworth and Mitchell 2000). This could have a twofold development: either their support for radicalism will decrease along with their aging, and then it can be assumed that the extremist manifestations are due to the rebel – tendencies of the youth and to the imminent insecurity of the early years of one's life. Or the support for neo – fascist features will increase along with their aging, and in those cases there is not much to do. It is very much possible that these two tendencies coexist in a society, and each country has the tools to influence which one of the directions will be stronger. If the economic situation and the welfare policies will focus more on the youth and on helping them at the beginning of their careers and lives, it is possible to observe a decrease in the tendency of young people to keep the neo – fascist attitudes all their lives long.

3.2. "Meso" perspective

As argued above, the social and economic elements are very important in determining the rise and development of fascist ideology and attitudes. From this perspective the contemporary context is very much different from the one in inter – war period. But what I intend to emphasize is that there are some general patterns and elements shared by the societies in both periods of time, which mostly contributed to the rise of fascism. And these common elements could emerge within any society at any time, so the emergence of fascism does not remain strictly related to the inter – war period of time.

Blum (1998, 183) summarizes the situation in Germany and Italy at the time fascist movements and parties emerged. "Both countries were states in which the old order had collapsed or no longer seemed to work. Democracy was either not deeply

rooted or a system of government of short duration, and nationalist sentiment often ran high. Worst of all, Italy and Germany faced the prospect of economic breakdown and social disorder after the trauma of World War I." Is this the situation nowadays in the European Union? Not at all. No economic breakdown, no war trauma, no social disorder. The national sentiment could run higher now because of the pressure of the European context. But all the other features are quite different.

Hainsworth (2000) discusses the features that could have influenced the rise of right – wing for the last almost two decades. Immigration is definitely one important phenomenon, especially when coupled with "unemployment and insecurity (in a broad sense)"; these two happen in the context of European integration, and, moreover, in an even more comprehensive process – that of globalization. The social lack of trust in the institutions, the post – modern alienation of individuals, the uncertainty of tomorrow, the emergence of new threats – those international – these are enough reasons to motivate the accession of the right – wing extremism. Schmid (1996, 82-83) observes that "many factors seem to indicate that today's rampant right – wing radicalism is clearly distinct from the rightist extremism of the thirties..." The main difference is that the current extremism is "less a program than an aggressive feeling. Right – wing radicalism is also a product of what could be called 'extreme normality' of this society. Boredom and satiety play a bigger role here than real problems."

These observations bring to the conclusion that there is a major shift both in the problems of society and, consequently, in the right – wing extremist discourse. After the end of the World War Two, the situation in Europe was completely different than at the end of the World War One. Europe started to move toward stabilization (Kindleberger

1981; Luebbert 1987; Maier 1981; Schuker 1981). The new political and social important issues in the process of stabilization were security, stability, and steady economic growth. As a consequence, the new extremist parties and movements adapted their discourse and their attitudes to this non – expansionist trend. In the inter – war period, invasion and external territorial expansion were essential goals for the fascist parties (Blum 1998). "Instead, the neo – fascist parties would focus...on the domestic political enemy: on those who were foreign, non – European, and non – white. They would target immigrants and asylum – seekers who, by virtue of their non – European ethnicity, were diluting the 'national substance' and depriving 'honest' Europeans of jobs" (Wolin 1994, 15).

In consequence, the new emerging right – wing parties stress "their commitment to representative democracy and the constitutional order" (Betz 1998, 4). He argues further that the new right extremism is hostile "against the political class and the administrative bureaucracy and their control over fiscal policy, and against the growing number of social groups relying on claims to social rights to gains access to public funding". What characterizes and differentiates the new extreme right (emerged in the 1980s) is the fact that it does not fight against the social order itself; it only claims "a radical transformation of the socioeconomic and socio-cultural status quo" (Betz 1998).

From the above arguments, we may conclude that the new right – wing extremism keeps the basic emotions and perceptions that generated fascism and extremism at the beginning of the 20th century, but they turned towards new emerging social problems. The new emerging right – wing extremist do not face either the war trauma or the economic breakdown of the inter – war societies, and it switched the focus toward new emerging problems in Europe, as immigration, unemployment and criminality.

3.3. "Macro" perspective

As mentioned above, the international, macro context has an important role in the development of the new fascist features. First, there are the feelings of frustration generated by the globalization process and the international connections. On one hand, people feel that they are even more insignificant in the global context, on the other hand they assume that both their individual identity and their national identity are endangered during these processes. Second, "having realized that military aggression and conquest are no longer feasible, neofascism has opted for the defense of Europe" (Laqueur 1996, 93). They are not interested in the present Europe, many of the neo – fascist rejecting the idea of the European union or most of the features of membership. They focus and praise more the Europe of the future, which will be created under their leadership. This aspect will be emphasized in the next subchapter.

The international context has much more influence on the contemporary fascist movements because it is different than in the inter – war era. At that moment, fascists claimed to oppose and fight mostly the rising Socialism and Communism (seen mainly as Jewish channels of manipulation) and, in a secondary less important position, the American influence in Europe. As it will be discussed in more detail later in the study, the Left has been defeated in Europe, especially after the fall of the Iron Curtain; it does not represent a threat or a valuable enemy any longer. The American influence is less visible, it is more the cultural values that spread, but not especially in Europe, but across the world. The American threat is also weak and could not sustain the radical discourse. In consequence, the new fascists focus on a broader international context and on the complex network of international interactions and relationships in order to argue that all

these developments harm individuals and nations, affect their identity, decrease their importance.

3.4. History or Story?

In consequence, 'unlike the politicized inter – war period when fascists and Nazis were actually struggling for power, much of the violent right – wing 'happenings' of today are not very politics" (Merkl, 1997, 40). But on the other hand, they have a similar destabilization potential; moreover, the Nazis parties did not enter the legislatures soon after they had been created. Nowadays, we may notice the same evolution – first, there were movements with a small political character, now we have right – wing parties in parliaments. Nazis took advantage from people's frustrations and insatisfactions.

One important difference between the inter – war fascism and the neo – fascism is that the latter has several ways of manifesting. In the case of the former, even though the ideological developments and features differed across Europe, fascism itself was spread and supported only through parties and parties platforms. For the last two decades, when the fascism has started to rise again in Europe, there has been the "extreme right subculture" that emerged first. Skinheads and other extremist gangs have evolved on the European streets. As early as 1954 Fleming assumed that " fascism is gangsterism personified" (41). But the 1980s and especially the 1990s have proved this assumption enough.

One important attempt of contemporary fascism is the rewriting of history – the way new emerging movements and parties reinterpret and position themselves in relations with the inter – war fascism. According to the way they approach the history of fascism, the new emerging movements and parties could be categorized in three main

divisions: The recidivist form – which looks nostalgically to the past; the radical form – which tries to reinterpret the Fascist tradition; and a hybrid form – which seeks to synthesize fascism with other ideologies, especially populism (Eatwell 1995). Some scholars argue even that there are no neo – fascist parties nowadays in Europe, but only "New Populist" (Taggart 1995). This difference has been addressed earlier in the paper, and as argued at that point, it would simply too much the situation and the ideological question, if a clear line was drawn between populism and neo – fascism.

The New Right contrasts itself deliberately and constantly with the traditional fascism. They know that Hitler's and Mussolini's times are gone, and that the modern Europe would not accept and subscribe to an obsolete program and ideology from 1930s (Laqueur 1996). In the aftermath of the World War Two all the former fascist states faced the dilemma of how to deal with their past. Two main problems in the process of (re)building nations after fascism were the incorporation of a negative past into the collective memory, and the radical identity change (Joppke 1996). All the former fascist states had two options: either to be continuous or discontinuous with their past. The same dilemma is faced by the neo – fascist movements. But as mentioned above, they are aware of the obsoleteness of some of the features of the traditional fascism and of the danger of recalling people's ugly memories of the 1930s fascism. In consequence, most of the new fascist movements avoid any reference to the past and focus only on the present and especially on the future. The most important step made in the direction of breaking any relationship with traditional fascism was the Holocaust Denial (Eatwell 1995; Griffin 2000).

There are two important trends adopted by the new right – wing extremism, namely the internationalization and the metapoliticization (Griffin 2000). The Europeanization of fascism has been mentioned earlier in the paper, it will be broadly discussed later on. But the second feature is more interesting at this point of discussion. The metapoliticization was also a characteristic of the 1930s fascism. It meant that the fascist leaders and organizers were able "to take over the state as a new type of force in modern politics which combined four components: an electoral party, a paramilitary army, a mass social movement, and an effervescent ideological discourse" (Griffin 2000).

These developments are interesting and useful in the respect of the current events and developments across Europe. Some scholars argued that the success on the streets did not mean success in the electoral arena (Backes and Mudde 2000). Others have aimed to prove that "an extremist, authoritarian movement...may indeed be able to mobilize the politically apathetic while it is still in a relatively early stage of development – provided social conditions are such that the extremist appeal will seem relevant to the immediately perceived needs of these persons" (O'Lessker 1968, 69). In support for this latter assumption, Blinkhorn (2000) argues that, in the case of traditional fascism, the transition from movement to regime was very slow but very sustained, and that the ideological support transformed rather quickly into electoral support.

If it was to argue how and why the right – wing extremist parties penetrate the political arena and the legislatures, another study, completely different, would be developed. It is not the subject of this thesis to investigate why and how people move toward electoral support for the right – wing extremist. Of importance for the hypothesis in this study is to observe that *there is* an increasing trend of support for the right – wing

parties in the electoral arena. As it will be argued in the next chapter of this paper, and as most of the scholars have emphasized (Freeman 1997; Helms 1997; Ignazi 1992), the main reason people move toward right is that they perceive the mainline parties as being unrepresentative for their needs and expectancies any longer. The problems and the challenges people face nowadays are too many and too complicated, and most of the people instinctually move toward parties which address these sensitive issues and offer discipline and order and the reestablishment of certain traditional well – known values.

As a summary finding, it might be assumed that the neo – fascist movements and parties share little with traditional fascism in the respect of clear and concrete issues. Time changed, people changed, society changed. But if we evaluated these issues in terms of their deep meaning and content, we would find that there are many similarities between traditional and new fascism. Both trends aimed to address people's needs of security, stability, authority and discipline. Traditional fascists fought the enemies outside (through territorial expansion); neo – fascists fight them inside (focusing mainly on the immigrant groups). These observations and the findings explained and discussed above support one of the hypotheses of this thesis, namely that fascism is not only an inter – war European feature. In its main and deep characteristics it has emerged again for the last two decades.

Chapter 4
In the Four Corners of the Continent

4.1. East – West – North – South

As discussed earlier in this study, the right – wing extremism supports traditional values, religion, and history – and in consequence nationalism is considered to be an important feature of the extreme right (Fischer – Galati, 1993). Nationalism has been studied from different perspectives, and the literature on this issue reveals various aspects and elements of this phenomenon. One of them is of particular importance for the purpose of this paper – namely the assumption that there is a Western nationalism which is 'good' because it promotes progress and social homogeneity, and an Eastern nationalism which is 'bad' because it determines rivalries, conflicts and heterogeneity (Brubaker, 1996, McCrone, 1998, Auer, 2000).

Auer (2000, 22) assumes further that "differentiation between the two concepts of nationalism can only be maintained by a purposeful interpretation of European history...the terms 'eastern' and 'western' are of little use, and indeed misleading, in discussing nationalism because these terms can hardly be conceptualized without geographical connotation". He accepts the fact that some *forms* of nationalism are more likely to encourage the development of democracy and liberalism (emphasis added). But these forms do not have anything to do with geographical delimitation. "Some forms of liberal and illiberal nationalism do coexist within each European nation and, thus, an analyst should be careful not to condemn a nation, because of its history, to be and remain illiberal in its inclination" (Auer, 2000, 22). The idea is that the former communist countries are not more exposed to right – wing extremism because of their

'type' of nationalism. And in this respect, it is not to be forgotten the fact that nationalism did legitimize both left – wing and right – wing dictatorships in Eastern Europe. The traditional use of nationalism in Eastern Europe does not necessarily have a right – wing orientation. The nationalism in Eastern Europe has always fulfilled people's need of protecting the national identity; nationalism was less a question of political orientation, and more a question of preserving the nation.

People in Eastern Europe felt always more threatened from outside than from inside. In the case of Germany, for instance, the nationalism was oriented toward the Jewish group within the society because they were perceived as endangering the German nation and the "Arian race". In the case of Eastern European countries, the anti – Semitism was part of the nationalist discourse, but not the core issue. Because the smaller Eastern European countries were more likely to be subject of invasion and incorporation into the empires around them than to be nationally threaten by the Jewish communities within them, they developed a different type of nationalism. But this Eastern nationalism gave birth to both Rightist and Leftist dictatorships, because anybody who assured the people that he would preserve the national identity and the territory of the country was welcome, no matter where on the political axis he was.

The Eastern European countries, *ceteribus paribus*, are as much exposed to right extremism as the Western European countries. Auer (2000) makes a distinction between "liberal" and "illiberal" nationalism, and he assumes that it is up to each former communist country to choose which way it will follow. And the danger is that *some* of these countries have chosen (or will choose) the "illiberal" type of nationalism (emphasis added). It is not a regional pattern, it is about the particular choice of each country. The

argument is that Eastern Europe, as much as Western Europe is exposed to the danger of fascism and right – wing extremism. It is up to each country's politics whether it will develop a liberal or illiberal type of nationalism.

On the other hand, there are scholars arguing that the right – wing extremism in former communist Europe is a specific feature of the transition process from the communist dictatorship to democracy. Szayna (1997) defines right extremism in this region as "political movements characterized by suspect allegiance or downright rejection of pluralism and authoritarian modes of rule" (p. 113). In the light of the previous arguments, and following this approach, of importance for the hypothesis of this study is to see whether the East European countries are more likely to adopt the "illiberal" type of nationalism because of their geo – historical context.

Braun (1997) emphasizes some of the communist legacies in the region. First, he discusses the fact than the lack of individual rights during Communist regimes generated a feeling a frustration, because the individual was made to feel unimportant and insignificant. Moreover, "communism inhibited the development of a more mature political culture" (p. 145). The political systems themselves did not develop properly and they did not have any experience of 'loyal opposition' when communist disappeared. Because of the same legacy, "the role of law remains a crucial question in the postcommunist states" (p. 148). And the last important thing is that "Communism created not merely a new class of the privileged but also status societies" (p. 149).

These elements form a more controversial context for the political system developing within the former communist countries. There is no evidence, however, that they enhance the probability of right –wing extremism emergence. Mikenberg and

Beichelt (2001) assume that the main origin of the right – wing extremism is the modernization process. Their observation is that "the radical right combines post – industrial aspects such as the use of modern mass media, issue politic, and the decreasing role of mass (party) organizations with the ideologies of a particular past, i.e. the mix of traditional nationalism in the East and the legacy of state socialism" (p. 6).

The Eastern European countries have faced all the features of the post – modern era without any transition; Communist rule disappeared and the countries had to adapt to the world outside the Iron Curtain. People did not reject these new realities; moreover, they were willing to join the rest of the world (namely the EU, NATO, and other economic, political, and security international arrangements). But they had to face also the dark sides of democracy and freedom – open market, unemployment, lack of statist guarantees. Moreover, the region has been exposed to minority problems for a long time. Communist rule kept all these conflict artificially under control, but they remained latent. Once Communist regimes over, minorities' issues became again very sensitive.

Behind all these concrete reasons, it was the psychological impact of the new world, where insecurity and fear and unknown were fundamental characteristics. As discussed above, it is hard for people, generally speaking, to adapt to these realities. For people born and raised under the Communist rule (which gave some guarantees and certitudes) was even harder. The right – wing extremist and fascist features developed by the Eastern European countries for the last 10 / 12 years are not a consequence of the past but rather of the future. People in Eastern Europe face nowadays the same challenges as people in Western Europe. They might have even harder times in adapting to the new challenges and realities than people in Western Europe, because of the 50 years gap of

gradual progress and change. This is not, however, a strong enough argument to prove that only the Eastern Europeans are moving toward or are attracted to extremist features.

One argument sustaining the geographical homogeneity of the right – wing extremism is the similitude of the issues people both in Eastern and in Western are more concerned about. These are globalization, modernization, insecurity of their jobs, insecurity of their future and so on. One important difference emerges and should be taken into consideration when addressing the prevention of extremist spread in Europe. It is the fact that the Western Europeans tend to blame immigrants for most of their personal social and economic problems. First and foremost, they blame the immigration for their unemployment. Secondly they blame the immigrant for the increases in crime rates. The Eastern Europeans, on the other hand, show much support for the European Union institutions and for the European integration as a whole. In the candidate states, the economic and social policies of the EU have not had a direct effect and impact on the people yet. The Euroskepticism is different in East and West. In the candidate countries, the extremist discourse is constructed on the idea that the EU accession could be beneficial for the country (especially for the economy), but national identity should be very carefully preserved and defended when the country will become an EU member. The EU accession is perceived as threatening the national identity more than the general economic or social situation. In the Western countries, the neo – fascist discourse emphasizes the disadvantages of the EU membership, especially the economic and social ones (unemployment and criminality), immigrants and the "free movement of workers" policy being blamed for that.

These are very important observations both in the current 15 states – arrangement of the European Union and in the perspective of an enlarged European Union. One of the possible developments of neo - fascism features in Europe, in the perspective of the enlargement, could be the Western perception that the new members are to be blamed for the economic and social problems of the current members of the Union.

At a lower scale, this happened in the case of German reunification. The East Germans were perceived as the "Germany's newest aliens", and their full integration in the former Federal Republic of Germany is still in process (O'Brien 1997). The same study indicates that, on the other hand, the East Germans were very open toward integration into the former Federal Republic's society, and that they were willing to adopt any necessary policy and change for full integration.

Another interesting lesson of the German case is represented by the findings of a special Eurobarometer survey published in April 2001 by *The European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia.* The subject of the research was the "attitudes towards minority groups in West and East Germany". One major finding was that people in West Germany are more likely to accept immigrants than people in East Germany. A second one was that people in East Germany are more likely to blame minorities than people in West Germany. And a third finding of importance was that the young East Germans are more intolerant towards minorities than young West Germans. These three observations could become further developments within the next accepted countries in the European Union. They could become more intolerant among themselves, being open towards the current EU member countries, but very hostile towards their current accession partners. And there is another variable to be taken into consideration in the case

of the current candidate countries; they still share historical rivalries and they all have significant minority groups one within the others' boundaries. This variable could induce even more tension and instability among them.

The rise and revival of fascism on the East – West axis is not an easy thing to define; a dividing line East – West oversimplifies the situation and misses important aspects of the relationships among the former Eastern bloc countries, among the current EU members, and especially between these two groups. Immigration is an important process all around Europe, and it cannot be stopped because freedom of movement represents one of the main features of the European Union nowadays; moreover, the desired "closer union" (Dinan 1999), and the intention of enlargement definitely involve increases in the mobility of Europeans. In an Eurobarometer survey of 2001 focused on the youth in the EU it was tested how the youth define the meaning of "being a citizen of Europe". The first three features mentioned by young people in the 15 EU countries were: right to work in any EU country (57%); right to move permanently to any EU country (51%); and right to study in any EU country (42%). Mobility is one of the core aspects of the EU and the European integration. On the other hand, "increased prejudice, direct and indirect discrimination, political opposition, and extensive violence are major European reactions to the new minorities" (Pettigrew 1998, 90).

Most of the developments within the EU discussed above regard also the Northern and Southern states of the continent. The Scandinavian countries have avoided parts of the EU integration aspects (in Denmark and Sweden the EMU referendum failed), or the accession as a whole (in Norway the EU accession referendum has already failed twice). The economic aspects played an important role in this developments (Scandinavians

feared that the EU membership would affect their countries' living standards; the fishing and agricultural policies of the EU were not favorable to the national economies of these countries; the environment standards of the EU have been perceived as harming the higher Scandinavian standards and so on). Still "immigration has also been an issue in EU relations, with fears that weaker borders within the EU will see a flood of people arriving to draw on welfare. Prospective eastern enlargement has sharpened such concerns. For Sweden in particular, membership of the EU has been seen as a challenge to the country's traditional neutrality in international affairs" (Auger 2002, 17).

In the Southern part of Europe, since mid – 1970s, there is an increasing trend in immigration, doubled by a decreasing trend in emigration. In the early years of the ECC, the Southern part of the continent was a provider of legal or illegal emigrants for the rest of the continent. Along with the accession of Greece, Spain and Portugal in the European Communities and their economic development and rising living standards, they have started to become receiver countries of immigrants, especially from the Third World. Their Mediterranean proximity to North Africa and their rather flexible visas requirements (because all of them – Spain, Portugal, Italy and Greece have always been popular tourist destinations and countries of mass higher education – so tourist and students visas were easier to be obtained in any of these countries than in the Northern part of Europe) transformed them in migration destinations.

From the above facts it can be observed that the North – South European axis has not developed different features than the East – West axis. The same migration trends and the same neo – fascist, xenophobic, and racist reactions all around Europe, despite the geographical direction. Figure 1 shows the current situation in Western Europe. If it is to

attach the Eastern part of the continent to this map, we may see that in most of the countries the electoral support for the nationalistic and/or xenophobic parties is actually decreasing. In the Baltic states their electoral percentages were insignificant in the 2000 elections (1 – 2%); In Czech Republic (1998), the xenophobic Rally for the Republic party won only 3.9% of the votes and it did not pass the electoral threshold to get into the Parliament. But the more conservative Civic Democratic party, however, won 27.7% and 63 places in the Parliament. In Slovakia, the same year, the xenophobic Slovak Nationalist Party won only 9.1% of the votes and it got 14 places in the Parliament. These two countries have elections this year, and it is interesting to see whether they will reject their nationalist xenophobic parties as Hungary did in late – April, when the Party of Justice and Life got 4.4% of the votes and it did not make it into the Parliament. In Poland (2001), the League of Polish Families, Christian – nationalist, won 7.9% of votes and 38 places in the Parliament. The only country where the nationalist – xenophobic party won a significant electoral support was Romania (2001). But as it will be argued later in the study, the causes of the support for the nationalist Party of Great Romania were strongly related to internal features of the Romanian society, and much less related to some "regional" issues.

As a summary of the above discussed arguments, findings, and facts, it may be inferred that there is no such thing as "regional" neo – fascism (neither Eastern nor Western; neither Northern nor Southern). There are some European features that push toward neo – fascist developments, and if it is to differentiate geographically, we may assume that the *European Union* countries are even more exposed to develop neo – fascist attitudes and to encourage right – wing extremist political shifts. The more

eastwards the EU will enlarge, the more likely it is to spread these features into its new member states, the current (still) Eastern bloc.

One of the main hypotheses of this thesis can be considered as verified, namely that there is no more likely geographical context for neo – fascism to emerge or develop. There is certainly an European likelihood to shift to the right, but this is a trend *all around Europe*, not only in the former Communist countries. In the next part of this chapter I will investigate how the European Union addresses this problem and how efficient are the measures it has already taken against the neo – fascist features arising around the continent.

4.2. The vicious circle of the compass…around Brussels

One inevitable question is what does the European Union do in respect of the rising fascism and extremism around the continent? The European Union has begun to be concerned about the issues of racism, xenophobia, and neo-fascism since the 1980s. The first attempt to address these issues was in a Council Resolution in 1985 (OJ C186 of July 26, 1985). This Resolution was meant to establish "guidelines for a Community policy on migration". In order to address the situation and the problems of the immigrants in the Member States, this Resolution emphasized the need to improve the knowledge of the immigrants about their rights (2(a)). It also stated that further consideration should be given to better means of integrating the migrant workers into the host Member State's life (2(b)). Another recommendation of the Resolution was the development of ways to inform and to promote awareness, such as: "the adoption of a joint declaration condemning xenophobia and racism; the setting up of pilot schemes for the organization

of briefing sessions at local level for staff of local administrators who are in contact with immigrants; the improvement of quality of free administrative assistance in areas such as justice, education and housing, in particular through better information and linguistic help in order that the quality of such services for migrant workers be equal to that available to nationals of the Member States" (6).

Following this Resolution, yearly surveys on racism and xenophobia have been conducted since 1988, and the results have been included in the Eurobarometer publication series. Moreover, the European Parliament appointed three Commissions of Enquiry on Racism and Xenophobia, in 1985, 1990, and 1993. These Commissions had the objective to analyze the results of the surveys, to improve the questionnaire, and to develop recommendations for addressing the problems resulting from the surveys.

The legal basis for these Commissions was threefold. First, the Preamble of the 1957 Treaty of Rome established that the EEC intends to take common action to eliminate the barriers to social progress and to preserve "peace and liberty" within their community. Second, the EC was legally bound (through the Treaty of Rome) to conform and support the actions and the principles of the Council of Europe, one of them being the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of 1950. So the EC had both the moral responsibility and the legal means to involve in addressing such issues as racism and xenophobia. The third source of legitimacy for these Commissions to be established was the requirement of the EC for all the state applying for membership to be democracies. The EC must assure first that its members have and preserve their democratic status, if it transformed the "democratic regime" into an accession criterion (Genn and Lerman 1986).

From one Commission to the next, the Commissions emphasized the need to expand the interviews so that they would include, first of all, the reaction of the people in Europe to the concept of immigrants in general, then to immigration from outside the Community and, finally, to the phenomenon of immigration originating in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe.[v] In 1997, the European Union established a permanent organism to deal with the problems of racism and xenophobia in Europe. *The European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia* (EUMC) has the role "to contribute to combat racism, xenophobia and anti-semitism throughout Europe. The EUMC works with the Council of Europe, the United Nations and other international organisations. It has the task of **reviewing the extent and development** of the racist, xenophobic and anti-semitic phenomena in the European Union and promoting "best practice" among the Member States" (emphasis in the original Mission Statement text of the EUMC on their site – www.eumc.eu.int).

One of the first things the Centre made at the moment when it was established was to synthesize the findings of the previous surveys, from 1989 – 1997. Ever since 1997, the EUMC has published every year an Annual Report about the findings regarding racism and xenophobia in the previous year. In the 1989 – 1997 synthesis, the major points were[vi] :

- an increase in the "quite racist" or "very racist" self – image of the EU citizens ("Much more than in the survey carried out in 1989, the survey of 1997 reflects the feeling of anxiety experienced by people in Europe, who are dissatisfied with their personal situation, feel increasingly insecure of the future and regard foreigners as a danger and therefore as something undesirable");

- an increase in the percentage of the people considering that foreigners were too numerous in their country (from 37% in 1989 to 41% in 1997);
- a decrease of the importance of the fight against racism (from 56% in 1989 to 22% in 1997);
- As regards the acceptance of persons originating from Eastern countries the level of unrestricted acceptance has decreased both on the European level (14% in 1991 as against 12% in 1997) and in specific countries, such as Germany (9% in 1991 as against 3% in 1997);
- The level of unrestricted acceptance of persons looking for political asylum in Europe is decreasing in Europe (24% in 1991 as against 20% in 1997). The variations among Member States are quite considerable in this connection.The level of restricted acceptance, however, does not show such a drastic change (57% in 1991 as against 55% in 1997).

Another important finding of that synthesis was the one emphasizing the importance and the confidence EU citizens had in the EU institutions that these were able to deal with racist and xenophobic issues. In 1997, the EU institutions were considered an "indispensable part" of the fight against those problems. Eighty-four percents of those questioned said they were in favor of that role and would want to see it strengthened. 79% felt that the European institutions should adopt and implement legislation that would prohibit racism, and 79% also felt that organizations that fight against racism should be supported.

The European Union institutions have started to develop clearer policies against discrimination since 1999. The Amsterdam Treaty (entered into force in May 1999)

reinforced the provisions governing human rights and fundamental freedoms at the heart of the EU (Article 6 and Article 7 of the Treaty on the European Union – Maastricht Treaty), and introduced a new Article 13 into the EC Treaty. Article 6 recalls the commitments of the EU to defend human rights and basic freedoms. Article 7 introduces the possibility for the EU to take some sanctions against a Member State that violates fundamental rights and basic freedoms. Under the new Article 13, the Community acquired for the first time, the power to take legislative action to combat racial discrimination. These are the legal bases under which the EU institutions operate against discrimination. Within this framework, the European Commission adopted a package of anti – discrimination proposals implementing Article 13 of EC Treaty. Among these proposals was included the draft directive on equal treatment irrespective of racial or ethnic origin, which was adopted by the Council in June 2000. The directive (2000/43/EC) sets out a binding framework for prohibiting racial discrimination throughout the EU, and it must be implemented in the national laws of the Member States by July 19, 2003.

Beside these legally bounding measures, the European Commission has moved toward promoting a coherent strategy of integrating anti – racism into all the EU policies, which is known as the principle of "mainstreaming". It involves mobilizing all general policies and action by actively and visibly introducing consideration about the possible impact on combating racism when drawing them up. Under this mainstreaming strategy are included mainly employment and gender equality policies, but also external relations (great importance being given to the policies designed to combat racism and to protect minorities in the candidate countries), education and youth programs, and research.

The European Union institutions are also very much involved in supporting anti – racism projects such as: *Community Action Programme* to combat discrimination; Community initiative *EQUAL*; Support for refugees; *Grotius* – the program of cooperation in the field of police and judicial matters; and the *European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights*. Beside these, the most reinforcement of fundamental rights and non – discrimination in the EU came with the proclamation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights at the Nice European Council on 7 December 2000[vii].

What are the outcomes of these policies and recommendation of the European Commission in the Member States? The most recent Annual Report (2000) elaborated by *The European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia* does not provide very optimistic results regarding both the racist and xenophobic trends in the EU countries and the effectiveness of the policies meant to combat them. The Report observes "extensive increases in racial violence, anti – Semitic attacks and racist threats" all around Europe, with a 33% increase in Germany and a doubled increase in the UK. Discrimination is also constantly reported in the EU Member States, especially regarding the labor market, employment and occupation. The main target groups of violence and discrimination are Roma, immigrants from North Africa, Bosnia and Albania – but Muslims are target anyway, no matter their country of origin – and Jews. The Report also observes that some of the Member States have already begun to enact legislation following the Council Directive (2000/43/EC), and that most of them have adopted the *principle of mainstreaming* recommended by the European Commission. At the same time, there are a lot of initiatives taken by various actors to combat discrimination and promote cultural diversity in the workplaces.

Are these measures and initiatives enough? What can be observed in reality is that the more policies and legal regulations there are, the more powerful neo – fascist features become, and the more electoral support right – wing extremist parties get. We may infer that the EU policies and approaches are not very efficient and that they do not properly address the xenophobic and racist trends Europe faces today.

Chapter 5
Austria and Romania

5.1. Leading Cases

Romania. The Romanian case of this country is a good one for some of the above assumption. Following some of the arguments favorable to a specific right – wing extremism pattern in Eastern Europe, Romania would have had many premises to develop it earlier and stronger. The fascist tradition is not foreign to Romania. The Iron Guard was an important organization within Eastern Europe at the beginning of 20th century. Romania had the toughest communist regime in the region; and in consequence the strongest legacy. Moreover, nationalism has ever been a strong feeling among Romanians, especially because the Great Union of all the provinces took place only in 1918. The minority question is very sensitive especially because of the Hungarians living in Transylvania, which is a tacitly disputed territory between Hungary and Romania. There is also the Roma minority – another disputed ethnic group which generated xenophobe feelings.

Even though all these elements have been there since the fall of communism, Romanians have been and still are strong supporters of EU and NATO accession (in 2001, Romania was on the first place among the EU candidate countries in supporting the accession – 80%; in trusting EU – 74%; and it had the highest percentage of desired speed of integration – 6.13%). They also encouraged their governments to privatize, to open the economic market, to democratize. People wanted reform, democracy, and capitalism. None of the elements presented above made them support in elections the extreme right parties. In Table 3 are included the percentages obtained by the Greater

Romania Party in 1992, 1996, 2000 elections. What one may see is that people did not support this party as long as their hopes and expectances from democracy were still high. When their living standard decreased heavily, when their economic situation became more and more difficult, when they fully mistrusted all the institutions within the state, when they considered that corruption dominated the society, and they have no other hope and when they did not see any other exit, they voted for PRM and its leader, Corneliu Vadim Tudor (November 2000).

It was a surprise for everybody that C.V. Tudor reached the second presidential run with Ion Iliescu. But then he was defeated in the 2nd run with a similar unexpected large difference (see Table 4). Most of the people declared that they voted for C. V. Tudor in the first tour just "to ring a bell", to make the politicians understand that they are unsatisfied with the progress of reform and democratization. It was not a vote for the nationalistic discourse of Vadim Tudor; it was not a deep extremism revival in the Romanians' political views. It was only a vote against the way reforms and economy went in the country, a way that did not fulfil the expectances of the electorate.

The right - wing extremist parties in Romania have been divided in two trends: "radical continuity" and "radical return" (Shafir 1999). "Whereas parties of 'radical return' look to the neotraditional values associated with fascist parties in the interwar period and finds models in such leaders as...Corneliu Zelea Codreanu..., parties of 'radical continuity' take their bearings from communist legacy itself, looking thus to Nicolae Ceausescu, for example, with admiration" (Shafir 1999, 213). The Greater Romania Party is included in the 'radical continuity' category. It is another proof that Romanians did not vote for traditional values of fascism and extremism, they have

elected PRM because of reasons related to contemporary economic situation. Most of the Romanians started to regret Ceausecu's time because of the certitudes the communist regimes gave them (and the assumption is valid for other former communist countries as well). Unemployment was not a problem, everybody got a house, and everybody afforded a Romanian car. The basic needs were fulfilled at that time. If they wanted to subscribe to the pure extremist ideology, they would have voted for a 'radical return' party. But they have chosen PRM because they only wanted security, certitudes, and guarantees.

Austria. About the waves in right – wing emergence in the post – WWII Europe we talked earlier in this paper. Betz (1998) identifies some particularities of the 'third wave' (1980 – 2000, 1): "the extent to which various right – wing parties and movements have successfully established themselves within roughly the same time span in a substantial number of Western democracies; the extent to which they have managed to influence the political discourse on a range of significant sociocultural and sociopolitical issues; and the extent to which they have succeeded in gaining significant political offices and positions".

Why that happened? The arguments discussed earlier allow us to assume that the main reasons Europe has been facing a new 'wave' of extremism lately are the socioeconomic and sociocultural changes. The post – industrialized era combined with the EU enlargement and deepening have determined the rise of the right – wing parties. The case of FPOE in Austria will illustrate these assumptions. It has developed for a while, along with the economic changes within society, but it gained even more support when economic changes started to be combined with Austrian accession into the EU.

These two main issues were combined with a third one – "a growing xenophobia. It is not always expressed openly although polls have shown growing hostility to foreigners even whilst the number of foreign workers in the country has been declining. It is deteriorating economic situation which explains the evolution of part of public opinion" (Harris 1994, 40).

The FPOE is a new phenomenon in post – war Austria. Nobody would have expected a right – wing extremist party to emerge in this country, taking into consideration its involvement in the WWII along with Nazist Germany. Since 1986, FPOE has been developing and has increased in importance and electoral support, partly also thanks to its new leader, Joerg Haider. His tough project of the "Third Republic" was like a "war" declared to all the old parties. "Joerg Haider is not a Nazi in a any traditional sense. Ideologically, his party does not stand for an equivalent of the *Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiter Partei* (Nazi Party, NSDAP). The FPOE has never developed any of the paramilitary trappings of the SA or other such groups...Furthermore, the FPOE under Haider has adopted a radically neo – liberal economic policy, demanding full – scale privatization and the private tendering of public services" (Morrow 2000, 60). Table 5 shows FPOE's electoral evolution since 1990. It was an ascending line, without any significant ups and downs, but proving firm increase in support.

From the above argument, we may observe that the links between contemporary FPOE and traditional fascist right – wing are very weak, if existent at all. Haider did not aim to bring to life again old stereotypes and frustrations. Because, as discussed earlier, they would not have been valid any longer. Haider created a political platform with the

aim to gain support from the new socially frustrated people. "In making direct appeals to the voters and using the option of the popular initiative, Haider was mobilizing a new, much more mobile political force, using highly emotive issue to undermine the traditionally solid lines of Austrian political support" (Morrow 2000,52).

Joerg Haider did not construct the ideology party on old fascist patterns. He followed the problems which were present in the contemporary society. On one hand he focused on the economic insatisfactions, the unemployment problems, people's mistrust towards politics and institutions; on the other hand he monopolized the EU accession's opposition, emphasizing immigration issues with a xenophobe discourse. "Anti – establishment, anti – partysm, anti – politics were the key issue of Haider policy" (Ignazi 1997, 59).

It is certain and accepted that he has never been a rebel, following the fascist nostalgia of inter – war period. With such an approach he would have never gained any support, because other problems are more sensitive for the Austrians nowadays, and because also the Nazi issue is still very sensitive for Austria as an European state. But Haider used different kind of strategy in order to be successful. "He has shrewdly combined a program of sensible reform with a rhetoric of ethnocentric nationalism" (Wistrich 2000). Haider knew how to speak out contemporary economic and social problems in a tough, strong, xenophobe and nationalist discourse.

Haider has in common with the Romanian Vadim Tudor the fact that they only had to speculate already present frustrations among people. They only needed to bring those unsatisfied people together and transform them into their electorates. The major difference is that FPOE has had a constant increase in public support, whereas PRM had

the chance to be there when people's economic situation was difficult and their mistrust in other institutions and parties very high.

5.2. Who is next?

At the moment I have started to focus on the study of fascism ideology, following new developments in Europe (beginning of October 2001), the latest election gains of right – wing parties in Western Europe were already 2 years old (Austria, Belgium, and Switzerland), and in Eastern Europe almost an year (November 2000). A month later after this research began (November 2001), the elections in Denmark brought the first surprise – the nationalist Danish People's Party (Dansk Folkeparti) won 12% (22 places) of parliament.

For 2002 some unpleasant surprises were expected in the elections of the Central and East European countries (Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia). Hungary passed the test in late – April 2002, when the nationalist, xenophobic party of Justice and Life was defeated in polls and it could not make to the parliament (it received only 4.4% of the votes, not fulfilling the required threshold of 5%). The Czech Republic and Slovakia will have election this Summer and, respectively, this Fall. In Czech Republic, the center – right party, the Democrat Civics, is likely to defeat the currently ruling Social – Democrat Party. The leader of the Democratic Civics is a well – known euroskeptic, Vaclav Klaus, and if his party wins, the Czech integration into the European Union will be seriously endangered. The case of Slovakia is even worst because the former nationalist prime – minister, Vladimir Meciar, is very likely to be elected again. NATO has already made clear that Slovakia has little chances to be invited to join the Alliance at the Prague

Summit because of these political developments; and if Meciar is elected indeed, then Slovakia will not be definitely invited to join NATO.

In between these controversial elections, however, France held its presidential elections the same weekend as the Hungarian parliamentary elections. If it has been to follow some major trends in the literature, as argued earlier in the study, we would have expected to see the victory of the Party of Justice and Life in Hungary, and the same old rivalry in France – Jacques Chirac / Lionel Jospin. But the dies fell in the opposite part: the nationalistic party was defeated in Hungary and Jean – Marie Le Pen made it to the second run in France. Europe got crazy for the second time in three years; Le Pen triumph is considered "one of the most significant events in post – war Europe" (Glover 2002).

Some have argued the Europeans are receptive to harsh anti – foreigner rhetoric because rapid globalization had made them feel like they had lost control over their lives. Fear of losing their jobs, economic problems, unemployment – all these are problems that push people toward more radical political views. Others have argued that traditionally centrist political establishment has brought the far right into play by losing touch with citizens' daily struggles, The European Union accession and participation are important factors that affect people's lives, and they are not particularly asked about many of the policies taken in Brussels. Beside the accession referendum in some late – comer countries, and the treaty referendum, the EU citizens are not consulted about anything concerning their countries' participation and positions in the EU institutions. The European Parliament elections are held once in four years, which seems not to be often enough for EU citizens. Both lines of causes are viable and serious enough to be taken

into consideration by the political elites in countries where the right – wing extremism has already won, or is developing toward electoral success.

Le Pen's victory should be also understood as Jospin's defeat. The Left lost in France, another important change in European politics. The Left lost a lot of its power and capital of trust in 1989, after the East European revolutions. France, however, remained one of the European bastions of the Left, with a serious tradition and an important popular support. The vote against Jospin showed that people do not see the Left as being a viable alternative for their expectances and insatisfactions any longer. They move toward a more radical position because they perceive the Left being as corrupted and unable to respond to their views and needs as the liberal, democrats, or centrists.

"Europe is facing exciting times. Especially, because wherever right-wing populists share government responsibilities the rules of democracy are changed. First, there are attempts to place sympathizers in top positions in the media and to adapt the programs to the populist aims. The second arena of political change is the legal system of the respective countries. And quite often, an attempt is made to prepare the economic structure for political interventions" (Der Standard 2002). Democracy is in danger not only because of this changes; it is endangered by the anti – radical manifestations and calls to the population. In France, for instance, there have been for the last week media campaigns, intellectuals' public speeches, and all kind of appeals to the population *not to* vote for Le Pen in the next run. Jacques Chirac, the other candidate in the second run, refused any direct meeting with Le Pen on television; in schools, in universities,

everybody teaches anybody else no to vote for Le Pen. The same happened in Romania almost 3 years ago, after Vadim Tudor made it in the second run.

Glover (2002, 34), however, makes the point that "if we are democrats, we cannot write off millions of voters simply because they make a choice we would not make. To do so is to widen the gap between the governors and the governed". The solution is not to impose to voters whom to vote with, or who to avoid. It makes no good, and it does not help the trust of the people in "democratic" parties of forms or government. It is more likely that Le Pen will not win the elections and will not become the president of France. It is more likely that people only wanted to ring a bell for their governors that something goes wrong and that people's needs and expectancies were not fulfilled. The same was the case in Romania – voting Vadim Tudor for the second run, the electorate intended to show to the democratic coalition that they were weak, corrupted and not representative any longer. They also wanted to show to the elected president in the 2nd run that he was not really desired, but he is only the lowest evil possible at that time.

It might be the same case for France in these presidential elections; if it is to look at the pre – electoral situation, we may see that the atmosphere was very confused, the number of candidates was a record in the history of the French Republic (16), the political platforms were very similar, and it was clear that people would have a hard time in making up their minds. The polls before the elections showed a high number of undecided, but it was clear, at least for the mass media, that the polls were not able any longer to correctly measure the situation. Out of this confusion, but at the same time, paradoxically, lethargic certitude (the common sense assumption that 'probably the candidates for the second run will be the same old Chirac / Jospin'), the political

earthquake emerged. Chirac made it in the second run indeed (with 19.67%), but his contra-candidate will be Jean – Marie Le Pen (with 17.02%), who defeated Lionel Jospin (who won only 16.07%).

Maybe the French only intended to show to their traditional political parties and forces that they were not representative any longer and that there is always an alternative for change, and that the electorate would not hesitate to switch toward parties and movements that would be closer to them and more interested in the current day – to – day needs and fears of the people. But even if it is the case in France, and Le Pen will be defeated on May the 5th, the warning signal was pulled. It is up to the French elite to get closer to the electorate and to try harder to answer to its needs. And this was not a signal only for France; all the European countries should reevaluate their policies and possible radical developments within each of them.

The first who feared other such developments around Europe, including their own country, were the British. Few observers expect to see the British National Party gain the kind of political support that similar right-wing extremist groups have in other European countries such as France, Austria, Denmark, Italy or the Netherlands. Historically, the far right has never won much support in Britain" (Wagner 2002, 66). But the elections in France raised some concerns across the Great Britain as well, since in May there are local elections and the British Nationalist Party has 668 candidates nationwide. Even though the British find enough arguments against the idea that the right – wing extremism could emerge in their country, they seemed to have understood very well the signal of Le Pen's victory in France. "Successive governments have done little to promote integration. Of course, integration is not necessarily a recipe for social harmony - it has not proved so in

France - but segregation is surely more likely to lead to division and possibly conflict. Many ordinary people resent continuing illegal immigration, as one unusually perspicacious senior government minister has privately admitted to me. But the Government seems unable or unwilling to do much about it. With the British record for decency and moderation, it may seem fanciful to suppose that a home-grown Le Pen might come along and successfully exploit this situation. Our first-past-the post political system also makes it very difficult for extremist parties to gain much headway. This explains why, in the past, racist politicians have had to shelter unobtrusively in the margins of the Tory Party, and even of Labour. Nonetheless, the level of disenchantment with mainstream political parties is high - as a turnout of only 58 per cent at the last election suggests - and only a fool would say this presents no dangers" (Glover 2002, 38).

Le Pen's success might have beneficial effects, if parties and leaders in Europe understood it as a wakeup call. If not, then more Le Pens will arise around Europe, and some of them might actually win. It is early to evaluate how this European political event has been understood around the continent and what type of attitudes and changes, if any, it will determine in other European countries. Unfortunately, it is likely that most of the European countries will adopt the line of thinking expressed by Simon Serfaty of the Washington – based Center for Strategic and International Studies: "We're not about to relive the 1930s in Europe. Europe has never been more democratic, never more prosperous, never more secure than it is today" (Associated Press 2002).

Another approach and line of developments that, especially in the light of the latest events, seems to be more viable and realistic. "The next elections to the European Parliament will take place in 2004. It can no longer be ruled out that a broadly based

right-wing populist list will be formed, which, in view of the widespread resentment, will have a good chance of doing well. As has already been said several times in this respect, Joerg Haider could be one of the initiators. And Austria might find itself in a role it has already played once: the scene of a switch towards authoritarian times"(DerStandard2002).

In fact, no later than a month ago Haider was accused of offering electoral support to a right – wing extremist party in Germany. The opposition Social Democrat Party in Germany accused Joerg Haider of allowing to have his image on electoral posters with the leader of the Free German People's Party (FDVP) in a campaign in Saxony – Anhalt (Deutsche Presse – Agentur, March 14, 2002). And this is only one step taken by the Austrian leader toward his aim of an Europenization of fascism, toward the unification of all the movements across the continent. After the first run the French presidential elections, he declared to the Austrian newspaper Der Standard: "It's not about an organization. It's about people who want to change course, and there are a lot of people involved in this mission" (Associated Press, April 24, 2002). So Haider still believes in his mission and in the imminent spread of radical right among the Europeans.

Conclusions

This thesis was intended to test two main hypotheses regarding the neo – fascism re – emergence across Europe in the 1980s and 1990s. On one hand I assumed that neo – fascism is not a particular characteristic of the Eastern European countries that are in the process of transition to democracy; my assumption was that fascism could emerge anywhere in Europe nowadays, with the same intensity and causing the same problems. On the other hand I tested the hypothesis that the neo – fascism shares many fundamental aspects with the traditional , inter – war one; my view on this issue was that the fascism is not an historical feature that characterize only one moment and then it disappeared for good. I argued that fascism still represents a threat for Europe; it is a ghost haunting the continent.

It was mainly a qualitative case, based on comparative case studies and times series analysis. I used some data provided by the national elections and by national or European surveys in order to support the arguments made in the paper. I dedicated a special part of the study to the cases of Austria and Romania because I considered them to be representative for the main hypotheses tested. But other substantial evidences and examples have been used from other European cases; I also discussed very recent electoral developments involving right – wing extremist parties or leaders.

In order to prove argue that fascism is not an East European feature and that its danger is equally shared by the whole Europe I identified and emphasized the common elements which scare and concern people all around the continent. I argued that the Communist legacy does not involve a likeliness to develop authoritarian attitudes; on the

contrary, because that long time oppression, people in Eastern Europe are more open toward European Union and are looking forward for the integration. I also argued that usually the democratization process is not a cause for the emergence of fascism; an exception was the case of Romania, where the very difficult economic situation and the generalized corruption (as consequences of the democratization process) determined people's turn toward radicalized positions.

I observed that the context provided by the European Union is more likely to develop neo – fascist features. In the Western countries immigration is the main problem and one of the pillars of the neo – fascist discourse. Unemployment, criminality and all other socio – economic problems are considered to be immigrants' fault by the extremist groups. As a logical consequence of these findings I inferred that the spread of neo – fascist features and issues will go along with the European Union enlargement eastwards. In this respect I analyzed the policies and measures the EU institutions have developed and have proposed to the Member States in order to prevent and address the problem of the rise of radicalism and xenophobia. My observations in this respect allow me to argue that the European Union institutions have not chosen the most appropriate measures and means for dealing with the neo – fascist emergence. The results have shown that the neo – fascist tendencies are increasing around Europe despite the EU policies, or better said, along with them.

The next focus was on the testing of the hypothesis that fascism was not a particular feature of the inter – war Europe; I investigated the issues that drove people toward fascism in the 1930 and I compared them with those of the 1990s. One main observation was that the same basic feelings, fears and concerns drove people in both

periods of time toward fascism. Insecurity, instability, economic and social problems – these are the background elements necessary in a society in order to develop fascist features. The neo – fascist movements and parties avoid to make any explicit reference to the 1930s fascism; but they exploit the same weaknesses and feelings of the people. The main difference is that nowadays fascists are oriented toward groups of people within their countries, not outside their countries as they did in the 1930s. It is not about territorial expansion any longer, and about imposing by force the "Arian race". It is about integrating in some very limited ways the "others" within the society; the majority left should be thrown away, if not worst, killed. There is nothing new both in the fears of the people and in the way they react and the attitudes they develop. These cannot be isolated moments in the history; these are permanent characteristics of the human nature that cannot be changed and that are ready to explode each time people feel endangered or aggressed.

The case studies and the examples and illustrations used along the study strengthen these findings and the testing of the two initial hypotheses. Fascism is not either a geographically or a temporarily insulated phenomenon. It could emerge at any time, in any place in Europe, and the contemporary political, social, and economic context of the European Union seems to provide a more and more favorable environment for the emergence and the development of neo – fascist features.

This thesis offers a framework and background at the same time for further studies and tests about European fascism. From ideological metamorphoses to electoral support, a lot of hypotheses could be elaborated and tested. It is a broad and fascinating enough subject to offer unexpected ways of inquiry and surprising answers. My aim was

only to bring argument about contemporary approaches (both in the literature and at the policy – making level) that consider fascism either an insulated phenomenon or an irrelevant aspect of the contemporary Europe. I intended to develop a study as comprehensive as possible in order to support my argument that fascism does exist, does evolve, does develop, and could become an imminent threat. From now on, as argued above, it is the task of other scholarly researches either to strengthen the arguments discussed in this thesis or to take them on different paths of reasoning and arguing. This study could also be considered as a very modest starting point for the elaboration of further policies within the European Union in order to address the neo – fascism emergence. I have not been particularly interested in developing and proposing alternative policies within this study; this could also be a further development of the modest contribution to the study of fascism I tried to make in my thesis.

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TABLE 1

LIST OF POLITICAL PARTIES THAT ARE GENERALLY CONSIDERED TO BE PART OF THE EXTREME RIGHT PARTY FAMILY OF WESTERN EUROPE (1980-95)

Country	Extreme right parties
Austria	- Freiheitliche Partei Osterreich (FPO)
Belgium	- AGIR - Front National Belge (FNB) - Parti des Forces Nouvelles (PFNb) - Vlaams Blok (VB)
Denmark	- Fremskridtspartiet (FPD)
France	- Alliance Populaire (AP) - Front National (FN) - Parti des Forces Nouvelles (PFN)
Germany	- Deutsche Volksunion (DVU) - Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands (NPD) - Republikaner (REP)
Greece	- Ethniki Politiki Enosis (EPEN) - Enomeno Ethniko Kinema (ENEK)
Italy	- Alleanza Nazionale (AN) - Lega Lombarda (LL) - Lega Nord (LN) - Lega Veneto (LV) - Movimento Sociale Italiano-Destra Nazionale (MSI-DN)
Luxembourg	- Nationalbewegong (NB)
Netherlands	- Centrumpartij (CP) - Centrumdemocraten (CD) - Centrumpartij'86/Nationale Volkspartij (CP'86) - Nederlandse Volksunie (NVU)
Norway	- Fremskrittspartiet (FPN)
Portugal	- Forca Nacional-Nova Monarquia (FN-NM) - Partido da Democracia Crista (PDC)

	- Partido de Solidariadade Nacional (PSN)
Spain	- Falange Espanola de las JONS (FE) - Fuerza Nueva/Frente Nacional (FN/FN) - Union Nacional (UN)
Sweden	- Ny Demokrati (ND) - Sverigedemokraterna (Sd)
Switzerland	- Lega dei Ticinesi (LT) - Nationale Aktion fur Volk und Heimat (NA) - Schweizer Autopartei/Parti Suisse des automobilistes(AB) - Schweizer Demokraten/Democrates suisses (SD) - Schweizerische Republikaner Bewegung/Mouvement republicaine Suisse (SRB) - Vigilance
United Kingdom	- British National Party (BNP) - National Front (NF)

Source: Cas Mudde. 1996. "The war of words defining the extreme right party family." *West European Politics*. 19(2): p225-49

TABLE 2
THREE FACES OF AUTHORITARIAN NATIONALISM

COUNTRY	FASCISTS	RADICAL RIGHT	CONSERVATIVE RIGHT
Germany	NSDAP	Hugenburg, Papen, Stahlhelm	Hindenburg, Bruening, Schleicher, Wirschaftspartei etc.
Italy	PNF	ANI	Sonnino, Salandra
Austria	NSDAP	Heimwehren	Christian Socials, Fatherland Front
Belgium	Late Rex, late VNV, Legion Nationale	Verdinaso	Early rex, Early VNV
Estonia		Veterans' League	Pats
Finland	Lapua/IKL	Acad. Karelia Society	Mannerheim?
France	Faisceau; Francistes; PPF; RNP	AF, Jeunesses Pat, Solidarite Francaise	Croix de Feu; Vichy
Hungary	Arrow Cross, National Socialists	"Right Radicals"	Horthy, National Union Party
Japan	Nat'l Soc/some "Imperial Way"	"Japanists", some "Control"	Konoye/IRAA
Latvia	Thunder Cross		Ulmanis
Lithuania	Iron Wolf	Tautinikai	Smetona
Mexico	Silver Shirts	Cristeros/Sinarquistas	PRI
Poland	Falanga, OZN	National Radicals	Pilsudski, BBWR
Portugal	Nat'l Syndicalists	Integralists	Slazar/UN
Romania	Iron Guard	National Christians	Carolists, Manoilescu
South Africa	Gray Shirts	Ossewa-Brandwag	National Union
Spain	Falange	Carlists, Renovacion Espagnola	CEDA
Yugoslavia	Ustasa, Zbor	Orjuna	Alexander, Stojadinovic

Source: Payne, Stanley G. 1980. *Fascism: Comparison and Definition.* Madison: University of Wisconsin Press

TABLE 3
Greater Romania Party (PRM) – Electoral Performance

	1992	1996	2000
Chamber of Deputies	**3.9%**	**4%**	**19.5%**
Senate	**3.8%**	**7%**	**21%**

Source: http://www.ux1.eiu.edu/~cfsdr/Romdata.htm

TABLE 4
Presidential Election – November 2000

	1st TOUR	2nd TOUR
Ion Iliescu	**36.4%**	**66.8%**
Corneliu Vadim Tudor	**28.3%**	**33.2%**

Source: http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/

TABLE 5
Austrian Freedom Party (FPOE) – Electoral Performance

	1990	1994	1995	1999
National Council	**16.6%**	**22.5%**	**21.8%**	**26.9%**

Source: http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/

[i] The concept of "waves" in the development of the fascism in Europe has been introduced by Klaus von Beyme. 1988. Right – Wing Extremism in Post – War Europe. West European Politics 11(2) (04/1988)....

[ii] As an illustration of how these shopping – lists of fascism's characteristics could look lie, see for instance Paul Hayes. 1973. Fascism. New York: Free Press, who identifies as features of fascism: (1) racism; (2) a concept of an elite with an emphasis on the "charismatic leader'; (3) a notation of an all-inclusive totalitarian state; (4) a commitment to nationalism,; to (5) socialism; and to (6) militarism; (7) a utilitarian conception of economic processes; and (8) a disposition to employ force and violence in the pursuit of political and national interests. Or another good illustration is Otto – Ernst Schueddekopf. 1973. Revolutions of our Time: Fascism. New York: Praeger: (1) an opposition to the prevailing tendencies of their era; (2) an extreme nationalism; (3) anti – individualism; (4) some kind of involvement with socialism; (5) a transposition of the class struggle to the international level; (6) an addiction to elitism; (7) an exploitation of military models and "an extreme racialism which usually appears in the form of anti – semitism".

[iii] I own this classification to Roger Eatwell – The Rebirth of the 'Extreme Right' in Western Europe? who used it when investigating the electoral breakthrough of the new right – wing extremism parties in Europe. I considered this classification as very useful for discussing the levels where fascism emerges and develops.

[iv] The scholars arguing the end of ideology were primarily: Raymond Aron. 1955. "Fin de l'ideologie?". In T.W. Adorno, and W Dirks (Eds.) Sociologica, Frankfurt. Raymond Aron. 1962. The opium of the the Intellectuals. New York. Edward Shils. 1955. "The End of Ideology?" Encounter, 5: 52-58. Danile Bell. 1960. The End of Ideology. Glencoe, Ill. S.M. Lipset. 1960. Political Man. Garden City.

[v] This evaluation of the standards of the EP Commission was given on the *European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia* (EUMC) web site, at: www.eumc.eu.int/publications/eurobarometer.htm

[vi] at: www.eumc.eu.int/publications/eurobarometer.htm

[vii] All these information are available at: www.eumc.eu.int and europa.eu.int